Suicide-1937

Suicide Is First of Year's Deaths

1-9-37

BALTIMORE—Cornelius Tinsley, 42, who committed suicide by slashing his throat at his home, 917 E. Arlington Avenue, was the first of 1937 deaths.

Other deaths listed by the city health department, here, included:
Allen, James, 43, 743 Eislen-st.
Holmes, Maggie H., 59, 2471 Druid Hill-av
Brown, Richard, 46, 565 Mosher-st.
Washington, David, 19, 1213 Park-ave.
Crawley, Mary, 51, 1423 E. Eager-st.
Davis, George W., 52, 1414 E. Monument-st.

N. C. Man Sips Lysol To End Love Affair

1-9-37

Wilbert Gray, Durham Insurance Agent, Commits Suicide

DURHAM, N. C. (ANP)—The recent suicide of Wilbert A. Gray, prominent local insurance man, was attributed to continued brooding over a love affair, by his friends and associates in the business and social world here last week.

Gray, 29 year old youth ended his own life here Thursday of last week by drinking lysol at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Louis Spaulding. He was rushed to Lincoln hospital but died shortly after being admitted.

According to those who knew him best, he was deeply in love with a well known college girl here and wanted to marry her. However he felt that he could not make a home for her and this thought was constantly on his mind.

It is said that the young industrial life insurance salesman had failed in an attempt to borrow money recently and that for several days he was in a desperate mood.

Gray is a native of Raleigh, N. C. and graduated from the Washington High School of that city in 1930. He was an outstanding athlete in high school and he continued his athletic exploits at Shaw University where he attended college.

He worked in the insurance business in both Raleigh and Durham and was well known in the younger set in both cities.

The young man is survived by his mother, Mrs. Maggie Gray, who lives on South Wilmington St. in Raleigh, a grandmother, one sister and three brothers.

His funeral was held at the First Baptist Church of Raleigh with the Rev. O. S. Bullock, pastor, officiating, on last Sunday. He was buried in the Mt. Hope Cemetery in Raleigh.

Negro Hangs Self, Using Grave Strap

6-16-37

BIRMINGHAM, ALA., June 15.—(AP)—County Investigator Gyp Evans said today Grant Jackson, 60-year-old negro, committed suicide by hanging himself with a grave strap in the front yard of his daughter's home.

The body was found hanging from a tree in the yard, Evans said. Around the neck was looped a strap used by undertakers in lowering caskets into graves.

Montgomery, Ala., Advertiser
December 28, 1937

Alabama's Suicides Reached Peak In '36

More suicides occurred in Alabama in 1936 than in any other year since vital statistics began to be compiled in 1914, according to records of the State Health Department, which show 229 persons ended their own lives. The 1935 total was only 211.

Alabama's negro population, constituting approximately 36 per cent of the total, accounted for less than eight per cent of last year's suicides. Only 16 were reported as involving negroes, as compared with 213 involving white persons. The white suicide death rate of 11.6 per 100,000 population was more than seven times the negro rate of 1.6 per 100,000 population.

Fourth Suicide Attempt Successful for Youth, 19

Body of Charles Ford Found in Gas-Filled Room of M Street

Washington, D.C.

LEFT NOTE ASKING CREMATION OF BODY

Washington, D.C.

Love Tiff Indicated From Contents of Missive; Was Honor Student

7-3-37

After failing three times in attempts to end his life over a period of three years, Charles Ford, 19-year-old boy, met success on the fourth try last Friday, when the despondent youth committed suicide by taking gas at his home, 33 M Street, Southwest.

Ford, who lived alone at the M Street address was found lying on the floor of his home by Preston L. Ashton, a neighbor. All the gas jets in the room were opened and paper had been stuffed in the door apparently to prevent an earlier discovery of his fatal act. Four weeks ago, Ford had attempted suicide in a similar manner, but his efforts proved futile when friends smelled gas and summoned police in time to revive him. He is reported to have tried to end his life on two previous occasions since 1934.

Left Note

Physicians of Casualty Hospital ambulance pronounced the youth dead on arrival at 9:32 a.m. Friday morning. Coroner J. McDonald McGruder issued a certificate of death by suicide.

No definite reason for Ford's wish to end his life could be advanced by friends, although many expressed the opinion that the youth had repeatedly complained of being unhappy. The only clue to his unhappiness was expressed in a note, addressed to his father, Alfred Ford, who lives around the corner from his home, 1257-a Carrollburg Place, Southwest. The note read:

It's all over now. Do not be angry at anyone but me and ask God to lift the sorrow I've caused your heart. It's an ache in my heart that never can be mended, so this is the best way after all."—Charlie.

Ford was an honor graduate from high school two years ago, was reputedly employed on a decent salary. His mother died about three years ago.

Funeral Rites Held

Disregarding his dying wish, survivors held funeral service from the Friendship Baptist Church Tuesday, followed by burial at Rosement Cemetery.

The youth is survived by his father, Alfred Ford, and a brother, Alfred, Jr.

S. S. Rayford, Despondent, Kills Self

Cuts

St. Louis Druggist Takes Own Life by Drinking Dose of Poison

7-16-37

ST. LOUIS. —(Special) —Funeral services were held yesterday, July 15, at 9:30 a. m., at the Beal funeral home, 2726 Lucas avenue, for Samuel Simeon Rayford, 38-year-old druggist who took his own life in his drug store, 2001 Biddle street, Monday morning. The Rev. George Stevens, pastor of Central Baptist church, officiated. A soldier's burial was held at Jefferson Barracks.

Pallbearers were Dr. Jacob William, William E. Simpson, Stoesel Sims, Dr. J. R. Roberts, Vincent Johnson and Dr. Walter McDonald.

Drank Deadly Poison

An ounce of deadly poison ended the career of Rayford who was well known in St. Louis and East St. Louis, Ill., where he owned thriving drug businesses.

Despondent because he had been ill for several months, the druggist walked behind the prescription counter a few minutes after he had opened the store and drank an ounce of hydrocyanic-merick acid. The widow, Mrs. Genevieve Rayford, and Mrs. Leonard Coby, discovered the body when they entered the store shortly after Rayford had opened. The empty bottle was found on the floor beside the body.

At the coroner's inquest Tuesday, the widow said Rayford had made several threats of suicide. He spent three weeks in May at Hot Springs, Ark., taking treatments. He left no notes before he ended his life.

Mr. and Mrs. Rayford, both registered druggists, worked side by side since October of 1935, when they established a drug store at 2000 Biddle street, two months after they were married at Denver, Colo. Two years later the established a second store at Denver Side in East St. Louis.

Father Was Teacher

Born at Gunnison, Miss,, Rayford moved to Memphis with his parents, Prof. and Mrs. S. S. Rayford, when he was a small child. His father was a school principal for many years prior to his death 27 years ago.

Rayford attended Rust college, Holley Springs, Miss., Tuskegee institute, Ala., Howard university, Washington, D. C., and Meharry Medical college, Memphis, where he was graduated with honors in 1922.

While a student at Howard, he volunteered and spent eight months on the front lines in France during the World war. He served as corporal of the signal corps with Company A of the Field Signal battalion, division 325. At the close of the war he returned to Howard.

Refusing to work in a drug store that was not his own, Rayford went to Denver after graduating from Meharry and worked as a railroad porter until he had saved enough money to establish his own store in 1924.

He was married to Miss Genevieve Coby, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. I. C. Coby of Denver, August 27, 1925.

Many Relatives

Those who survive are: The widow, Mrs. Genevieve Rayford of the home; Mrs. Eva B. Rayford, mother, Memphis; Mrs. William Woods, 86-year-old grandmother of Gunnison; five uncles, Otis Woods, tailor, 1925 Belleglade avenue; Dr. W. B. Woods, Memphis; R. J. Woods, farmer near Gunnison, Miss.; Theodore Woods, merchant, Mound Bayou, Miss., and A. M. Woods, casket manufacturer of Memphis, three aunts, Miss Celeste Woods, Gunnison; Mrs. Bural Sanders, druggist of Clarksdale, Miss., and Mrs. Alberta Tolliver, Danville, Ky., and Mr. and Mrs. I. C. Coby, Denver, the widow's parents.

Mr. Coby, Theodore Woods, A. M. Woods, Mrs. Eva B. Rayford and William E. Simpson, Meharry classmate from Hamlet, N. C., arrived in time to attend the funeral.

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